



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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5400/1792

OR120-03-30

Dora Ridge CT

EA OR128-02-01

Lower East Fork Coquille

07/29/03

DECISION DOCUMENTATION

for

Dora Ridge Commercial Thinning

OR120-03-30

Background

An Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) of the Myrtlewood Field Office, Coos Bay District, Bureau of Land Management, has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA), which concluded in a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Lower East Fork Coquille Analysis Area. The thirty-day public review and comment period was completed on May 15, 2001.

The EA analyzes the implementation of the "Proposed Action Alternative". The proposed action involves the commercial thinning and Density Management of young plantations (30-50 years old) in the Lower East Fork Subwatershed of the East fork Coquille River Watershed. The Dora Ridge Commercial Thinning Timber Sale (OR120-03-30) is that portion of Alternative II (Proposed Action) where no known live Port Orford Cedar lies within any of the sale units or along any BLM managed roads used for hauling, that would be impacted by implementing the project. The proposed commercial thinning (CT) activities for the Dora Ridge CT Timber Sale are located in T28S, R11W, Secs. 1, 3, 9, and 11; Willamette Meridian of Coos County.

The following table shows the relationship between the Dora Ridge CT unit numbers and the EA unit numbers:

Table 1:

Dora Ridge CT Unit Number	EA Unit Number
1	29
2	29
3	5
4	3
5	23
6	4
7	6
8	9

The EA is tiered to the *Coos Bay District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan*, (RMP, BLM, 1995), which is in conformance with the *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on Management of Habitat for the Late Successional and Old Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* and its Record of Decision (ROD), (Northwest Forest Plan, Interagency, 1994), and the *Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standard and Guidelines* (Interagency, 2001).

Commercial thinning treatments would occur in the General Forest Management Areas (GFMA), while Density Management would occur in associated Riparian Reserves as defined in the *Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan*, 1995 and the Interagency *FSEIS Record of Decision* (ROD), 1994; respectively.

Informal consultation under Section 7(A)(4) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 [16 U.S.C. 1563 (a)(2) and (a)(4) as amended] was completed with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, where it was determined that this action would not likely adversely affect listed wildlife species or critical habitat. The estimated environmental effects contained in the EA are based on research, professional judgment, and the experience of the Interdisciplinary Team. No significant adverse impacts are expected on (1) Air Quality, (2) Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, (3) Cultural Resource Values, (4) Prime or Unique Farmland, (5) Flood Plains, (6) Native American Religious Concerns and/or Indian Trust Resources, (7) Hazardous Materials/Solid Waste, (8) Threatened or Endangered Species, (9) Water Quality, (10) Wetlands and Riparian Zones, (11) Wild and Scenic Rivers, (12) Wilderness Values, (13) Noxious Weeds, (14) Port Orford cedar Management, (15) Environmental Justice, (16) Aquatic Conservation Strategy Objectives, or (17) Energy production, transmission, or conservation.

Surveys for Survey and Manage species, as required in the *Record of Decision and Standards*

and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standard and Guidelines (Interagency, 2001) (S&M SEIS), have been completed and appropriate protection buffers established for all the units associated with this action. Results of the surveys are contained in Section P of the Analysis File for the EA.

The general public was informed of the planned EA through a letter (February 14, 2002) to those on the Resource Area's mailing list (which included adjacent landowners and the public requesting scoping notice of timber sale EAs), and to those receiving the District's *Planning Update* (October, 1998). An announcement was also posted on the District's Internet site, <http://www.or.blm.gov/coosbay>. Four public responses for scoping were received. The public was informed of the EA and FONSI through a letter (February 11, 2003), through a published Legal Notice in *The World* newspaper (January 13, 2003), and through the District's Internet site. Six public responses were received. Public comments related to the presence of POC led to the adjustment of acres treated from 211 to 138. Subsequent to these changes, the FONSI is still considered to be appropriate. Comments received have indicated the need for some clarifications: in stream reaches and no- treatments buffers.

- 1) A table and map depicting the recommended no treatment zones along individual stream reaches will be added to Appendix 2 of the EA and Section L of the Analysis File.
- 2) EA Page 20 paragraph 2 Original : *Each stream has been assigned a no-treatment buffer to retain direct overhead shading. In addition, the streams within the project units are considered intermittent/ephemeral thus; do not contribute surface flows during the critical summer months, when peak stream temperatures occur.* Revised: *Each stream has been assigned a no-treatment buffer to retain direct overhead shading. In addition, the majority of the streams within the project units are considered intermittent/ephemeral thus; do not contribute surface flows during the critical summer months, when peak stream temperatures occur. EA units 3 and 5, which are immediately adjacent to perennial streams, have increased no-treatment buffer zones of approximately 75 and 110 feet respectively.*

Decision

I have decided to offer for sale portions of the Lower East Fork Coquille EA units, as shown in Table 1, which will now be referred to as the Dora Ridge CT Timber Sale (OR120-03-30). This action consists of eight (8) commercial thinning units in GFMA, totaling 138 acres. This total acreage includes 45 acres of Density Management treatments in riparian reserve.

This project will enhance or maintain the growth and vigor of young stands through commercial thinnings and manage the Riparian Reserves through Density management thinning to acquire desired vegetation characteristics and to facilitate attainment of ACS objectives. Design features include retaining existing snags and down logs, leaving additional down trees after treatment, and creation of snags. In addition, this project will decommission 1.0 miles of existing roads. This

project would produce approximately 966 thousand board feet of timber. Treatments will be accomplished using skyline yarding and ground-base systems. The Design Features described in the EA and Best Management Practices described in the RMP (such as yarding method, snag creation, and down log creation/retention) are hereby adopted.

Rational For Decision

This project meets the goals and addresses the management opportunities set forth in the *Coos Bay District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan*, (RMP, BLM, 1995), and the *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on Management of Habitat for the Late Successional and Old Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* and its Record of Decision (ROD), (Northwest Forest Plan, Interagency, 1994).

Section 2.0 of the EA describes two alternatives: a “No Action” alternative and a “Proposed Action” alternative. The No Action alternative was not selected because it would not meet the objectives of enhancing the growth and vigor of the Matrix and Riparian Reserves, produce a sustainable supply of timber and other forest commodities, and manage the road system according to the transportation management objectives.

Informal consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for this project resulted in a Letter of Concurrence (1-15-01-J-278) on April 5, 2002 that this action would not likely adversely affect listed wildlife species or critical habitat.

Informal Consultation with National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has been completed. The Letter of Concurrence dated June 13, 2003 agreed that the proposed actions constitute a “not likely to adversely affect” to listed fish species and Essential Fish Habitat (EFH).

In accordance with Forest Management Regulations at 43 CFR 5003.2, the decision for this Timber Sale will not become effective until the Notice of Sale is published in a newspaper of general circulation in the area where the lands affected by decision are located. For this project, the Notice of Sale will be published in *The World* newspaper.

Richard Conrad
Richard Conrad
Myrtlewood Field Manager

07/29/03
Date

5400/1792
OR 120-03-30
EA OR 128-02-01

Dear Concerned Citizen:

Attached is a copy of the Decision Documentation for Dora Ridge CT Timber Sale, OR120-03-30. The Dora Ridge CT Timber Sale is a portion of Alternative II (Proposed Action) of the Lower East Fork coquille Environmental Assessment (EA). This Decision Documentation will also be posted on the District Internet site: <http://www.or.bom.gov/coosbay>.

In accordance with Forest Management Regulations at 43 CFR 5003.2, the decision for this timber sale will not become effective until the Notice of Sale is published in a newspaper of general circulation in the area where the lands affected by the decision are located. For this project, the Notice of Sale will be published in *The World* newspaper.

Sincerely,

Richard Conrad
Richard Conrad
Myrtlewood Field Manager

Attachment:
As noted

PLeman/kkw/072103/1792/EA/FY 02/0201/DoraRidgeDec